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Voice of the Rocky Mountain Empire

THE DENVER POST

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DENVER'S $937 MILLION BOND PACKAGE

Ten projects about to reap gains of passed measures

A woman and a child cross a railroad track Friday at East 47th Avenue and York Street on the way to Denver's Swansea Elementary School. Denver voters recently passed bond packages, a portion of which plans to build a bicycle and pedestrian bridge to make the crossing much safer. *RJ Sangosti, The Denver Post*

By Jon Murray *The Denver Post*

Denver's massive, $937 million bond package proved exceptionally popular with Denver voters last week. All seven components cleared two-thirds support among the nearly 143,000 voters who turned out, with the transportation package exceeding 75 percent.

But when will the roughly 460 projects, from small repaving plans to big new buildings, get started?

A celebratory Mayor Michael Hancock said last week that his administration was putting in motion a decade of construction that will touch many parts of the city. First up is a forthcoming request for bids from consultants for a project management contract.

By spring, the city could sell the first batch of bonds, just as officials are figuring out which projects are ready to go in the first round.

There's a lot in the package, starting with simple stats: 287 miles of road repaving, 33 miles of sidewalks and 49 miles of bikeways, plus renovations at dozens of city libraries, recreation centers, police and fire stations, and some big cultural facilities.

Here are 10 pieces of the package that show its sweep and have the potential to stand out as signature projects. They account for one-third of the bond package's overall value:

Pedestrian bridges in Elyria-Swansea and Overland

Amount: $22.4 million

Details: Two pedestrian/bike bridges are on tap. One (costing $13 million) will span busy Santa Fe Drive and freight and light-rail tracks in south Denver, between the Evans Station and the South Platte River, making it safer to cross while improving several neighborhoods' access to transit. The other, targeted for $9.4 million, on top of $2.5 million already secured by the city, takes aim at a long-standing safety issue: an at-grade railroad crossing near East 47th Avenue and York Street, just blocks from Swansea Elementary, that is unavoidable for some children on their walk to and from school.

Impact: School and community leaders in Elyria-Swansea say trains that idle on the tracks in that area can make children late for school or, worse, spur them to climb over the tracks between train cars. For years, they have asked city officials for help.

Transit and street makeovers on Colfax Avenue

Amount: $76.9 million

Details: The bonds won't fully pay for Denver's ambitious bus rapid-transit project, which could dedicate the

BOND »8A

TAX-CUT PLAN

Tough calls loom ahead

Republicans' efforts for revision to be shaped this week as House and Senate Finance Committee vote

By Damian Paletta and John Wagner
The Washington Post

Congressional Republicans face critical decisions this week as they move within striking distance on a major legislative package to cut taxes, an achievement party leaders say is crucial to stabilizing the GOP's recent political tailspin ahead of next year's elections.

The House plans to vote on a GOP tax bill by week's end that would slash taxes for companies and overhaul the tax code for virtually every American family and individual. And the Senate Finance Committee plans to vote on its version of the package within the next few days.

Stark differences between the House and Senate tax bills remain unresolved, but there is enough overlap and — so far — muted intraparty resistance, making the White House increasingly optimistic that an agreement can come by Christmas, as President Donald Trump has repeatedly promised.

Enactment of the tax-cut package would mark Trump's first major legislative accomplishment at a point when his job approval rating has dropped to a record low for this point in a presidential tenure.

Still, potential quagmires remain. House and Senate Republicans risk colliding over whether Americans should be able to deduct local property taxes from their federal taxable income. The House GOP bill would allow Americans to deduct up to $10,000 of those taxes from

TAXES »9A

U.S. INTELLIGENCE

Ex-officials claim Trump being "played" by Putin

By John Wagner
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON» Two top former U.S. intelligence officials said Sunday that President Donald Trump is being "played" by President Vladimir Putin on Russia's interference in the 2016 election and accused him of being susceptible to foreign leaders who stroke his ego.

"By not confronting the issue directly and not acknowledging to Putin that we know you're responsible for this, I think he's giving Putin a pass," former CIA director John Brennan said on CNN's "State of the Union." "I think it demonstrates to Mr. Putin that Donald Trump can be played by foreign leaders who are going to appeal to his ego and try to play upon his insecurities, which is very, very worrisome from a national security standpoint."

Appearing on the same program, former director of national intelligence James R. Clapper Jr. said he agrees with that assessment.

"He seems very susceptible

TRUMP »7A

DENVER & THE WEST

TWISTING IN THE WIND: TAX CREDITS AT RISK

The U.S. Senate's recently released tax bill preserves key wind construction tax credits that are at risk in the House's version. Industry groups remain apprehensive about the plan, which has yet to be finalized. »2A

Lockup offers a hand up. A veterans-only jail unit opens at the Jefferson County Detention Facility to help reinstill discipline and offer support and training to those who have served their country. »2A

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